

Create Your Own Reality painting graciously donated by Melissa Harris (melissaharris.com)



Changes and choices YOU can make — little by little, bit by bit, day by day, to create a healthier environment, bolster your immune system and reduce the risk of breast cancer.

# Healthy Lifestyles

# 2016 Calendar

by Breast Cancer Options

*A not-for-profit organization dedicated to supplying information, support and advocacy.*

# How Lifestyle Choices Impact Breast Cancer Risk

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www.breastcanceroptions.org

LOOKING AT  
WHO YOU ARE,  
NOT JUST  
WHAT YOU HAVE,  
HELPS US  
TREAT CANCER  
DIFFERENTLY.



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[www.healthquest.org/cancer](http://www.healthquest.org/cancer)

**T**here is ever increasing evidence of a strong relationship between the lifestyle choices we make—how we live, what we eat—and our individual risk of developing breast cancer. While known risk factors, such as those listed here, are not absolute indicators of whether a person will or will not develop breast cancer, the risks listed can all be reduced by modifications in lifestyle.

**WEIGHT GAIN:** Weight gain after the age of 18 is associated with a 45% increase in breast cancer risk and higher rates of breast cancer recurrence and mortality in both premenopausal and postmenopausal breast cancer patients. **WEIGHT GAIN AFFECTS SURVIVAL!** The greatest impact is after menopause when circulating estrogen levels normally drop dramatically. The main estrogen source after menopause is the body's fatty tissue so the more body fat a woman has, the more estrogen she will have circulating. 80% of all breast cancers are fueled by estrogen. Further study showed that women who were overweight and were fairly inactive had the highest risk for breast cancer. Women who were overweight but were physically active did not appear to have a higher risk.

**BREAST DENSITY:** Breast density is a major risk factor for breast cancer. Dense breasts have less fatty tissue and more fibrous and glandular tissue. Density can make it difficult for radiologists to see trouble spots on mammograms. Women with dense breasts on mammogram have a breast cancer risk that is 1.2 to 2 times that of women with average breast density. Hormone replacement therapy produced a twofold increase in breast density in post-menopausal women. **CAN BREAST DENSITY BE REDUCED? THE ANSWER IS YES!** Substantial weight loss and increasing age decrease density. Increased Vitamin D and calcium intakes are also associated with decreases in breast densities. Studies have shown that high fiber- low-fat diets (organic, high in vegetables and fruit) may alter density through their effect on sex hormones and circulating estrogens. In addition, increasing physical activity among obese postmenopausal breast cancer survivors may be a reasonable intervention in reducing breast density on mammograms.

**SMOKING:** Studies show a 30 to 40% increased risk of breast cancer among: Women who were current or long-term smokers (a pack a day for 11 years or more)—Women who started smoking at a young age—Women who started smoking before the birth of their first child. There is a significant association between breast cancer risk, smoking, and genes that break down tobacco smoke carcinogens. Teenage girls who smoke increase their risk of developing breast cancer before they reach menopause. Smoking is also associated with increased risk of breast cancer before age 50 in BRCA1 and BRCA2 mutation carriers. **IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO QUIT!** Researchers say that the risk of breast cancer decreases as the number of years since the women quit smoking increases. Within 10 years after a woman stops smoking her risk of breast cancer falls back to the level of a woman who has never smoked

**ALCOHOL INTAKE:** Alcohol interferes with estrogen pathways in multiple ways, influencing hormone levels, affecting estrogen receptors and disrupting absorption of folic acid, a B vitamin needed for production and repair of DNA. It is a substantial risk factor for development of the most common type of breast cancer in post-menopausal women—estrogen and progesterone receptor positive (ER+/PR+). Compared with teetotalers, women who drank one to two drinks a day were 32% more likely to develop ER+/PR+ breast cancer. Having three or more drinks daily raised the risk of ER+/PR+ tumors by 51%. Alcohol intake is also linked to increased breast density in both pre and post-menopausal women. **SUGGESTIONS:** Cut down on alcohol, or, better, avoid it altogether. Take at least 400 micrograms of folic acid a day if you drink.

**LACK OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:** Women who increased their physical activity after a breast cancer diagnosis lowered their risk of death from the cancer by 45% when compared with women who were inactive both before and after their diagnosis. Women who cut back on physical activity after diagnosis had a four-fold increase in mortality. There are physical and psychological healing benefits to exercise. Exercise can chase the blues, help fight stress and raise energy levels. Exercise oxygenates the body and stimulates lymphatic circulation which helps to clear the body of toxins. It can help reduce the amount of estrogen in your body, which may also reduce the risk of cancer by normalizing body weight and reducing breast density. **SUGGESTIONS:** Brisk walking, Strength training, Swimming, Tai Chi, Yoga 3 to 5 days a week at moderate intensity for 20 to 60 minutes.

**HIGH STRESS LEVELS:** Studies show that stress may contribute to an increase in cancer by weakening cell responses to environmental toxins. Stress affects the immune system lowering Natural Killers Cells and T-lymphocytes—white blood cells that are key to immune response. Studies show that feelings of happiness and optimism can play a protective role against disease and influence the interaction between the central nerve, endocrine, and immune systems. **SUGGESTIONS:** Let go of what you cannot control; Get the help you need; Do what you love. **STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES:** Yoga, Meditation, Guided Imagery, Exercise, Hypnosis, Prayer. We may not have control over cancer recurrence, but we can have control over the worry.

**EXPOSURE TO ESTROGEN AND ESTROGEN MIMICS:** Prolonged, uninterrupted exposure to estrogen and estrogen mimics (xenoestrogens) can increase breast cancer risk. Like estrogen, xenoestrogens bind to estrogen receptors and can affect estrogen levels. Xenoestrogens are found in household products, pesticides used on produce, cosmetics and meat based animal feed, among other things we are exposed to everyday. Understanding and reducing these exposures can be a factor in reducing the risk of developing breast cancer. **SUGGESTION:** Learn to be an informed consumer and avoid harmful products.

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# January

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# The Importance of Making Informed Medical Decisions

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## RESOURCES

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[optiongrid.org/option-grids/  
grid-landing/9](http://optiongrid.org/option-grids/grid-landing/9)

**A** breast cancer diagnosis often brings decisions that can be confusing and frightening. Friends and family may bombard you with information which may or may not be relevant to your situation. You will have many questions...Should I choose surgery or something less invasive? Is this procedure right for me? Should I watch and wait and defer a decision for now? Should I have this test? What are the chances that this treatment will work for me? How will it make me feel? How will it change my life?

The treatment that is best for one person may not be what is best for another who is in exactly the same situation. Good-quality care requires that procedures, treatments, and tests be not only medically appropriate, but also desired by informed patients. Shared decision making recognizes that medical decisions require interaction between patients and their doctors; that decisions be informed by the best available clinical evidence; and that decisions reflect the patient's goals and concerns. Take time to make your decisions. Consider the type of lifestyle you live and the values that you hold dear. Make your decisions based on both values and evidence. Be sure that you understand all of your options and that all of your questions get asked and are answered.

### Making decisions can be difficult because:

- There is more than one choice.
- Each choice has good points (pros) and bad points (cons).
- There is no "correct" choice.
- What you choose depends on what is important to you.

**FIRST STEPS:** Breast cancer feels urgent but most people diagnosed with breast cancer (regardless of the stage of their breast cancer) can safely take a few weeks to:

- Take the time and space to take it in and explore how best to proceed. Most tumors have been growing for years when they are discovered. Ask your doctor if you can spend a few weeks thinking about your choices.
- Gather information and ask questions. Ask your doctor which choices you need to make when. You don't need to decide everything at once. However one choice may affect other choices for your care. Get hard copies of all test results. Write your questions down.
- Get second opinions on what type your cancer is, and how it should be treated. Second opinions can bring you peace of mind and provide reassurance by confirming a diagnosis but they might also suggest new directions or considerations. If you can, get a second opinion at a National Cancer Center (NCC)-designated cancer center.

**When breast cancer patients came to a specialty center for second opinions, recommendations for surgery changed for more than half. The changes stemmed from differences in mammographic interpretation, pathologic interpretation (Doctors base their treatment advice on your pathology report), and evaluation by medical and radiation oncologists and surgical breast specialists.**

Get second opinions from a:  Pathologist  Breast surgeon  Radiation oncologist  Medical oncologist

When you go for a second opinion take all your records and all related test results, tissue slides, x-rays and/or other imaging with you so they will not need to be redone. The doctor should review your medical records and reevaluate your diagnosis to make sure that it's an accurate second opinion. If your second opinion mirrors your first opinion you can move forward with treatment, confident that you are doing the right thing.

**EXPLORE THE DIFFERENT TREATMENT OPTIONS:** If all the doctors you've consulted with agree on a particular course of treatment, and you feel comfortable with it, your decision should be fairly easy. Sometimes you may be presented with more than one appropriate treatment plan. For example, there may be a nearly equal chance of recovery with a mastectomy or with a lumpectomy plus radiation or chemotherapy. In a case like this, your doctor can give you an informed opinion and you can have a discussion of the pros and cons of each alternative and, but only you can make the final decision about which treatment feels right. Also have a discussion about the possible side effects of whatever treatments you choose. The important thing is that you must be able to trust and believe in the persons charged with your care, so that you can focus your energies on getting better and moving ahead with your life.

**GET THE SUPPORT YOU NEED AND ASK FOR HELP:** This can range from support groups or private counseling, to assistance with keeping your life functioning smoothly. While family members and friends can be a tremendous help, sometimes people who are not emotionally involved can offer a different type of support. Give yourself a break, and give someone else, a friend, relative, co-worker or neighbor an opportunity to give of themselves. You would do it for them!

If you need support and/or evidence-based information call a support and advocacy organization like Breast Cancer Options.

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# February

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Valentine's Day 14	President's Day 15	16	17	18	19	20
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# New Screening Guidelines

It is important to understand that screening mammograms are used to detect cancers in women who have never had breast cancer and who have no evidence of disease. Mammograms investigating possible problems are diagnostic mammograms.

There has been controversy over recommendations for the timing of screening mammograms in women of average risk for breast cancer. The controversy arises because if you ask two experts if screening mammograms save lives, you will probably get two different answers. Some research shows that screening mammograms save lives; other evidence shows they do not. With so much conflicting scientific evidence it's quite likely that both experts are right and that screening mammograms do save some women's lives but they do not save other women's lives. Because mammograms find cancers that would have caused death or harm to an individual and cancers that would not have caused death or harm during an individual's life over-diagnosis has become a concern. Breast cancer remains the second leading cause of death in women, killing about 40,000 every year. Any decline in the breast cancer mortality rate is likely the result of improved treatments rather than widespread screening.

Evidence also shows that breast cancers are missed on screening mammograms about 20-30% of the time. A British study concluded that for every life mammograms save, three other women are unnecessarily treated for a cancer that would never have threatened their lives. Screening mammography is associated with an increased incidence of small cancers but not with decreased incidence of larger cancers or significant differences in mortality.

**Women who are over-diagnosed and over-treated suffer lasting physical, psychological and financial harms of treatment for something that would never have come to their doctors' attention were it not for a screening mammogram. These harms are not trivial or incidental.**

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) has recommended sweeping changes in its breast cancer screening guidelines. Here are their recommendations, based on all the latest data:

- Routine screening of average-risk women should begin at age 50, instead of age 40.
- Routine screening should end at age 74.
- Women should get screening mammograms every two years instead of every year.

Women who have a mother or sister with breast cancer may benefit more than average-risk women by beginning screening in their 40s. Women with a lifetime breast cancer risk of more than 20% or who have BRCA mutation, screening of some kind should begin at 25 years of age or at the age that is 5 to 10 years younger than the earliest age that breast cancer was diagnosed in the family.

There are 4 different categories of breast cancer found during screening:

- Slow-growing cancers that would be found and successfully treated with or without screening.
- Aggressive cancers, so-called bad cancers that are deadly whether they are found early by screening, or late because of a lump or other symptoms. Screening does not help women with these aggressive cancers.
- Innocuous cancers that would never have amounted to anything, but they still are treated once they show up on a mammogram. Women with these cancers are being over diagnosed, are treated unnecessarily and therefore are harmed by screening.
- A fraction of cancers are deadly but, when found at just the right moment, can have their courses changed by treatment. Women with these cancers are helped by mammograms. Clinical trial data states that 1 woman per 1,000 healthy women screened over 10 years falls into this category.

**DETECTION METHODS:** These are used to detect cancer as early as possible. Techniques other than mammography may be used when women are considered at high risk.

**DIGITAL VS. 3D MAMMOGRAMS:** 3D mammograms have been found to correctly identify cancers 4-5% more often than regular 2D digital or film mammograms. Just as importantly, women who undergo screening with 3D mammography are 15% less likely to be called back for more testing due to a suspicious finding that turns out not to be cancer. Two recent large studies show that 3D mammography finds significantly more invasive cancers.

**TIMING OF MAMMOGRAMS:** For pre-menopausal women, mammography is the most accurate on days 1-9 of the menstrual cycle. This is a low-estrogen, low-progesterone phase and breast tissue tends to be less dense. Mammograms are more apt to spot small, hard-to-see tumors.

**ULTRASOUND:** About 40% of women, usually younger patients, have dense breast tissue and ultrasound is a tool for them. It can determine if a suspicious area is a non-cancerous cyst or solid tissue (dense mass). The FDA has approved a new 3D automated breast ultrasound system (ABUS) that could help clinicians find even more cancers in women with dense breast tissue. The ABUS finds more cancers in women with dense breasts than mammograms alone.

**MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING (MRI):** MRI is used if a breast problem is detected using mammography, other imaging or physical exam. MRI offers better sensitivity for detection of breast cancers for women who carry a BRCA-1 or BRCA-2 mutation.

**BREAST SELF EXAMS (BSE):** 40% of breast cancers are discovered by women or their partners. Knowing and noticing slight changes can send women to the doctor for testing. Checking one's breast can help detect breast cancers that mammograms miss. It isn't necessary to follow the rigid, formal breast self-exam technique. Just get to know your normal breast.

**Detection is Not Prevention! Never rely on any technology as your sole method of surveillance**

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**THERMOGRAPHY**

## RESOURCES

[www.advancedbc.org](http://www.advancedbc.org)

[www.BCMets.org](http://www.BCMets.org)



# Sleep, Darkness, Hormones and Breast Cancer

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Our modern lifestyle poses many threats to optimal hormone function and balance. Stress, toxicity, exposure to toxins, poor quality food choices, lack of sleep, and many medications are known hormone disruptors. The most overlooked hormone disruptors are exposure to light at night and the electromagnetic energy fields generated from cell phones and many electrical devices.

They disrupt our sleep and a good night's sleep is a potent weapon in the fight against cancer. The normal sleep-wake cycle, called circadian rhythm, is important for the production of the hormone melatonin. It is an internal biological clock regulating body temperature, endocrine functions, and many disease processes including heart attack, asthma and cancer.

**THE IMPORTANCE OF THE HORMONE MELATONIN** Changing natural body rhythms as we do in modern-day life, subjects us to deleterious health effects from too little sleep, but more importantly, chronically decreases melatonin production. Melatonin is produced by the brain in darkness, during sleep from the pineal gland. Light at night and electromagnetic radiation disrupt melatonin production making the cell's DNA more prone to cancer-causing mutations. Melatonin increases the level of naturally occurring antioxidants in breast cancer cells; may reduce the number of estrogen receptors on breast cancer cells; modulates immune function; decreases the invasive capabilities of breast cancer cells; inhibits the growth of breast cancer cells by interacting with estrogen-responsive pathways. Sleep problems are also linked to the risk of aggressive breast cancer and recurrence.

**Sleep is a required activity, not an option. Managing stress, adopting healthy eating and exercise habits, getting a good night's sleep, and finding good emotional and social support, should be regarded as much a part of cancer treatment as chemotherapy or radiation.**

Studies show that night shift workers have an increased risk of developing breast cancer. Researchers hypothesize that the increased risk in night shift workers is due to an increase in estrogenic stimulation when melatonin production is disrupted. Studies of blind women whose circadian rhythm are undisturbed by artificial light have a 50% reduced risk of breast cancer compared with their sighted peers. Women with breast cancer tend to have lower levels of melatonin than those without the disease.

**ELECTROMAGNETIC RADIATION (EMR) DISRUPTS MELATONIN** Overnight exposure of women to elevated levels of EMR disrupts melatonin production and increases estrogen levels. At night, continual cell phone use, watching TV, sitting in front of computer screens, reading with artificial light into the wee hours, or sleeping with a light on, all contribute to melatonin deficiency. These devices emit blue light, which tricks your brain into thinking it's still daytime. Normally your brain starts secreting melatonin between 9 and 10 pm, and light from these devices stops that process. Sleeping in a room surrounded by these devices suppresses our nightly melatonin production. Although exposure to electromagnetic fields cannot be totally eradicated we can learn to use wireless technology and use protective methods to minimize the loss of melatonin. The longer you stay in the dark the more melatonin your body produces.

Women with metastatic breast cancer who had failed to respond to Tamoxifen alone received melatonin supplements (20 mg every evening), and demonstrated an improved response to the drug. Melatonin may also enhance the effects and reduce the toxicity of some chemotherapy drugs used to treat breast cancer. Research is ongoing.

Melatonin is a potent hormone. People who are considering taking melatonin supplements should consult a knowledgeable healthcare provider who can help construct a comprehensive integrative treatment.

## SOME SUGGESTIONS TO PRESERVE YOUR MELATONIN LEVELS AND NORMAL CIRCADIAN PROTECTIVE RHYTHMS

- Avoid light at night. If you need a night light to go to the bathroom use a red bulb which won't suppress melatonin.
- Make sure your room is quiet and dark.
- Sleep at least 3-5 feet away from outlets and unplug devices. EMFs can disrupt your pineal gland and its melatonin production.
- If possible, complete work during the day; sleep at night.
- Avoid watching TV or using your computer at least an hour or so before going to bed.
- Natural daylight is just as important as nighttime darkness in maintaining a normal circadian rhythm. Get outside for 15 minutes each morning to allow your body to get a clear signal that it's daytime.
- Exercise regularly. Exercise done early in the day may promote better quality sleep. Vigorous exercise just before bedtime may delay sleep.

# April



The physicians at The Ultra-Wellness Center lead a team of nutritionists and nurses committed to helping each patient reach optimal health. Through a new method of diagnosis, they are able to identify the unique root causes of each person's illness, treat chronic, complex medical problems and restore overall wellness.

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# Inflammation and Cancer

Cancer is caused by internal factors (such as inherited mutations, hormones and immune conditions) and environmental or acquired factors (such as tobacco, diet, radiation, and infectious organisms). Only 5-10% of all cancer cases are due to genetic defects and the remaining 90-95% are due to known and unknown environmental and lifestyle factors. This provides major opportunities for reducing the risk of getting many cancers in the first place.

While inflammation is a protector of our health when it's an acute response to injury, chronic inflammation is a different story. Chronic inflammation underlies cancer development, promotion, and angiogenesis. Chronic, low-grade systemic inflammation—fueled by excessive belly fat, poor diet, lack of exercise, disrupted hormones, smoking, and gum disease—may explain why lifestyle-linked diseases have reached epidemic levels in Western countries, while remaining rare in the developing world. It orchestrates the microenvironment around tumors, contributing to proliferation, survival and migration.

High cortisol and insulin → obesity, inflammation → poor outcomes for cancer survival

## INFLAMMATION CONTRIBUTORS

**Physical & Mental Stressors:** The immune system is well designed to handle such physical stressors as microbes, sprained ankles and hay fever. It is not clear however, how the immune system reacts to the accumulation of other physical stressors—poor nutrition, lack of sleep, stress, food allergies, postural and joint misalignment and foreign substances. When faced with a lot of different stressors the intricately tuned immune system can get caught in a stress hormone–inflammation loop. Significant research has indicated that mental stressors provide as great a challenge to homeostasis and balance as physical conditions like influenza. Cortisol, is a hormone that is released along with adrenaline as part of the body's "fight or flight" response which is also activated by stress. Thus, cortisol, inflammation, weight gain, and a weakened immune system viciously cycle with each other unless cortisol and stress levels become checked.

**Sleep Deprivation.** Lack of sleep increases inflammation in the body. Sleep is a time for the body to recover and repair both mentally and physically. That's why sleep experts recommend getting 7–9 hours nightly to function optimally. Studies indicate that this time period is critical for biochemical balance in substances like Growth Hormone and cortisol.

**Anti-inflammatory foods:** vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds and healthy oils like olive oil or coconut oil. Avoid processed foods, dairy, wheat and sugar. Good examples of foods to include are apples, berries, broccoli, mushrooms, papaya, pineapple, and spinach. Drink water or herbal tea.

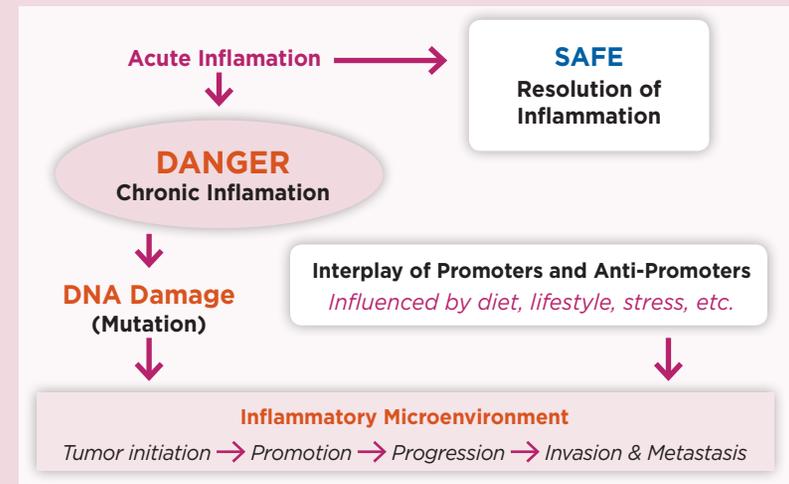
**Excess Weight.** Biochemical imbalances have also been linked to inflammation caused especially by excess intra-abdominal fat. Excessive intra-abdominal fat

produces a cortisol response, which tells the body to store fat; this begins a never-ending feedback loop. Elevated cortisol from stress increases insulin and creates abdominal fat. It turns up the production of hormones and pro-inflammatory cytokines (small proteins) and is linked to a number of chronic diseases like heart disease and cancer.

**Diet:** A huge contributing factor to inflammation is the Western comfort food diet, high in saturated and trans fats, simple carbohydrates and animal proteins. Eat a balanced, whole foods diet high in fruits and vegetables, fresh fish and nuts to get antioxidants and omega-3 fatty acids which help control inflammation.

**COOLING DOWN INFLAMMATION:** The best ways to fight chronic inflammation is to create an active lifestyle with increased exercise, adequate sleep and good nutrition.

It's also important to work at decreasing stress. Exercise and meditation reduce stress which reduces inflammation. By making small changes every day you can create a large impact on fighting chronic inflammation. A well rounded program should include exercise, a diet with little or no processed foods, and attention to stress relief. Begin each day with a plan adopting some of these healthful practices.

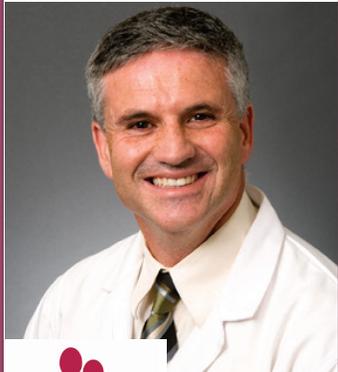


Anti-inflammatory supplements: Curcumin, Fish oil, Vitamin D, Spirulina, Boswellia, SAME, Ginger, Bromelain and Bioflavonoids

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# May

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29	Memorial Day 30	31				

# Treating Side Effects with Complementary Medicine

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## RESOURCES

[ascopost.com/ViewNews.aspx?nid=25640](http://ascopost.com/ViewNews.aspx?nid=25640)

[cancer.ucla.edu/index.aspx?recordid=805&page=644](http://cancer.ucla.edu/index.aspx?recordid=805&page=644)

The side effects you may experience will depend on the type, location, and extent of your breast cancer and the treatment you receive. Side effects are very individual and may not be the same for two people with similar diagnoses that are receiving the same treatment. They may even vary for the same individual from one treatment session to the next. Some of these side effects may show up immediately and go away when treatment stops and some may continue after you are finished with treatment. Some may show up long after treatment has stopped.

### **CHEMOTHERAPY - How to make it more effective at killing cancer cells with fewer side effects.**

**FASTING:** A small study of cancer patients underwent short-term fasting before and/or after chemotherapy. The patients reported far fewer side-effects. Studies show that fasting makes cancer cells more sensitive to chemotherapy and protects normal but not cancer cells against high-dose chemotherapy. The healthy cells stop dividing and are less affected by the chemotherapy resulting in lowered side-effects. In some combinations of fasting and chemotherapy the tumors actually disappeared. Fasting reduces plasma glucose, IGF-1 and insulin levels and produces a state of ketosis depriving cancer cells of nutrients. Clinical trials are ongoing. Fasting (for at least 72 hours prior to chemotherapy) can improve effectiveness and reduce the side-effects of chemotherapy.

**HAND-FOOT SYNDROME** (Palmar-Plantar Erythrodysesthesia or PPE) is the result of chemotherapy/biologic drugs leaking into the capillaries of your outer extremities ie.palms of your hands or the soles of your feet. It can cause irritating symptoms like redness, pain and tenderness. Dryness and cracking may occur in areas, in addition to a numbing or tingling sensation.

**Prevention:** Avoid anything that causes heat or friction near these areas for at least a week after exposure to cancer-treatment drugs. Stop activities like prolonged baths or exposure to warm water, vigorous exercise or unnecessary walking, chores (like washing dishes, cooking), or anything that rubs the surface of the skin (like using Band-Aids). Moisturize hands and feet to help prevent and ease the symptoms. Vitamin B6 may help reduce the intensity of hand-foot syndrome. Expose hands and feet to cool water or put them in an ice pack for 15 to 20 minutes per day. Urea cream 10% helps prevent HFS over the first 6 weeks of treatment with capecitabine.

**TOPICAL HENNA TO TREAT HFS/PPE: MAKE IT:** 1/4 cup water ---- 1/8 cup henna powder --- A squirt of lemon juice Bring the water to a boil, then turn off the heat. Add the henna slowly and stir until it is like creamy soup. Use about 1/8th of a cup. Add a squirt of lemon juice. Let it cool. (If you already have cracks, skip the lemon juice. It will sting.) **APPLY IT:** Cover a work area with an old towel. Paint a thin layer on your bare feet and hands using a foam brush to apply. **LET IT DRY:** It takes up to 15 minutes to dry. Let it sit for at least an hour. You can rinse it off or put socks on and leave it for your next shower.

**MANAGING FATIGUE FROM CHEMOTHERAPY AND RADIATION:** The best remedy for fatigue is exercise. This has been shown in studies. It is important to make sure there are no underlying medical issues adding to the fatigue, such as anemia or low thyroid function. Most often it is just "cancer-related fatigue" from the treatment. The main difference between cancer-related fatigue and just being tired is that you DO NOT feel better after getting more rest. Exercise at least 3 hours a week, and if you can, 5-6 hours a week. Any type of exercise helps. Yoga is very useful because it also tackles issues like concentration and stretching. Cancer-associated fatigue can be reduced by lipid replacement (fat-soluble vitamins like vitamins A, D, E), antioxidants and cofactors like coenzyme Q(10).

**CHEMOTHERAPY-INDUCED PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY (CIPN)** This affects the lives of up to 40% of cancer patients who receive chemotherapy. Nerves have a covering (myelin) that protects them from damage and ensures that they work properly. *The Use of Vitamin to Treat Peripheral Neuropathy Caused by Chemotherapy:* This was tested and found effective in a study in "Neurology." Patients on cisplatin therapy were given oral vitamin E, in the alpha-tocopherol form, before starting chemotherapy and for three months after. The incidence and severity of neuropathy was found to be significantly lower in the vitamin E group than in the control group that received a placebo.

**MOUTH SORES** Chemotherapy drugs can cause the lining of the mouth and digestive tract to slough off and become raw and tender. L-Glutamine is an amino acid that helps repair the lining. With mouth sores a gargle is recommended as well as oral capsules or powder mixed into water or juice.

**CHEMOBRAIN** This can affect up to 35% of breast cancer patients. Post-treatment, the common mental "fogginess" can prevent them from staying organized and completing everyday activities, such as sticking to a schedule, or remembering where they left the car keys. Breast cancer survivors with cognitive complaints participated in a 5-week group training program to help with memory and concentration and were compared to survivors who received delayed treatment at end of study. Women in the early intervention group reported improved memory compared with those in the delayed intervention group. They showed continued improvement and brain wave patterns normalized. (ASCO)

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# June

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5	Ramadan	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	Flag Day	14	15	16	17	18
Father's Day	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30			



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# Food as Medicine: You Are What You Eat

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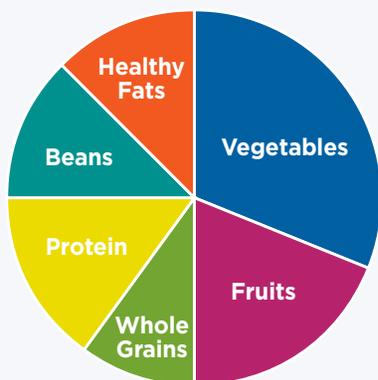


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The concept that your lifestyle and diet can change and influence the way your genes express themselves is called epigenetics. Nutrigenomics looks at how foods and nutritional supplements influence gene expression. Different foods may interact with specific genes to increase or decrease the risk of common diseases such as type 2 diabetes, obesity, heart disease, stroke and certain cancers by modifying gene expression. To keep gene expression healthy, it is important to control metabolic syndrome, inflammation, hormonal imbalance, and methylation.

- Compounds which inhibit cancer cell proliferation include: turmeric and curcumin, EGCG, bee propolis, genistein, resveratrol, selenium, and vitamin E.
- Compounds that act by indirect means to inhibit cancer progression include: vitamin C, anthocyanidins, proanthocyanidins.
- Compounds from food which stimulate the immune system include: maitake or shitake mushrooms, ginseng, glutamine, melatonin.

## What your plate should look like



A healthy diet consists of natural, whole foods, including lots of vegetables, fruits, clean protein, whole grains, healthy fats and plenty of fluids. Specific food compounds found in food that inhibit negative epigenetic effects and can help reverse or help prevent cancers include all cruciferous vegetables, such as cauliflower, broccoli, brussel sprouts, bok choy, cabbage, green tea, fava beans, grapes and turmeric.

## Dietary Guidelines

- Eat 2+ Servings of fruit daily
- Eat 5+ servings of Vegetables daily
- Eat from the full spectrum of the rainbow colors every day
- Choose produce that is deeply colored, fragrant, local, organic, in season
- Eat both raw and cooked forms

Why you should eat organic: Many pesticides and herbicides sprayed on fruits, vegetables and grains are “estrogen mimics” and can stimulate the growth of breast tumors and cause hormonal imbalances in both women and men. Organic food is grown without chemicals, hormones or antibiotics. Organic foods are higher in important nutrients. Organic eggs, dairy products and meats are free of the estrogen-like hormones and antibiotics that are fed to the animals and stored in their fat. Avoid genetically modified foods as the long term risks are unknown.

## DIET CAN MODULATE ESTROGEN SYNTHESIS, RECEPTOR ACTIVITY, DETOXIFICATION AND METABOLISM OF ESTROGENS.

### Nutritional Approaches to Improving Hormone Balance

- Increase phytoestrogens consumption (1-2 cups of cruciferous vegetables daily)
- Eat organic foods to minimize intake of xenoestrogens, hormones, and antibiotics
- Use filtered water (reverse osmosis) to eliminate xenoestrogens
- Use garlic for sulfur and to help with detoxification
- Consume a high-fiber diet (25-50 g a day, including legumes, whole grains, nuts and seeds, vegetables, fruit)
- Increase intake of omega-3 fatty acids (small cold-water fish: wild salmon, sardines, herring) and flax seeds
- Balance glucose metabolism through a low glycemic load, high phytonutrient index

### Foods That Cause Hormonal Imbalance

- Saturated and trans fatty acids
- Refined sugars and carbohydrates
- Processed foods and artificial sweeteners
- Dairy products
- Alcohol consumption
- Exposure to environmental toxins
- Xenobiotics, antibiotics, and hormones (in commercially raised livestock (meat & dairy))

### Foods to Quench Inflammation

- Spices: curry, ginger, garlic, parsley, paprika, hot pepper
- Wild, cold-water fish (Omega-3) & seaweeds
- Grass-fed (pastured) meat, free range dairy, eggs
- Onions, garlic, hot peppers
- Olive oil, fish oil
- Green tea
- Leafy green & cruciferous vegetables
- Berries (blueberries, cherries, raspberries)
- Apples, pineapple, pomegranate, kiwi

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# July

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**F**ish is a high-protein, low-fat food that provides a range of health benefits. White-fleshed fish, in particular, is lower in fat than any other source of animal protein, and oilier fish contain substantial quantities of omega-3s, or the “good” fats in the human diet. Omega-3 fatty acids help maintain cardiovascular health, are important for prenatal and postnatal neurological development and help reduce inflammation. Despite their valuable qualities, fish can pose considerable health risks when contaminated with substances such as metals (e.g., mercury and lead), industrial chemicals (e.g., PCBs) and pesticides (e.g., DDT and dieldrin). The chart below can help you choose fish that is low in environmental contaminants and safe to eat.

Fish choices on the Seafood Selector are categorized three ways:

- Eco-Best Choices include fish from healthy, well-managed populations, and the fishing or farming methods used to catch or raise the fish cause little harm to the environment.
- Eco-OK Choices have improvements to make in how they are managed, the health of their habitat, or how they are caught or farmed.
- Eco-Worst Choices are overfished or caught or farmed in ways that do considerable harm to the environment.

*Courtesy of Environmental Defense's Oceans Alive campaign*

## BEST AND WORST SEAFOOD CHOICES

FISH	ECO-BEST	ECO-OK	ECO-WORST
SALMON	Canned Salmon Wild Salmon from Alaska	Wild salmon from Washington	Farmed or Atlantic salmon
SHRIMP	Pink Shrimp from Oregon Spot prawns from Canada	Brown shrimp Farmed shrimp from US Northern shrimp from US & Canada Spot prawns from US White shrimp Wild shrimp from US	Blue shrimp Chinese white shrimp Giant tiger prawn Imported shrimp and prawns
TALAPIA	Tilapia from US	Tilapia from Latin America	Tilapia from Asia
TROUT	Farmed Rainbow Trout		
TUNA	Albacore from US or Canada Yellowfin from the US Atlantic caught by troll.pole	Canned light tuna Canned white/albacore Imported bigeye/yellowfin caught by troll.pole	Albacore tuna (imported longline) Bluefin tuna Imported bigeye/yellowfin tuna caught by longline

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# August

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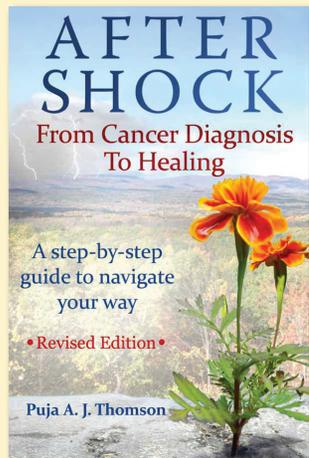
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# How and Why to Detoxify

**A cancer diagnosis is never easy.**

Take charge of your healing journey with this

**REVISED, EXPANDED, PRACTICAL GUIDE.**



By PUJA THOMSON  
author of

*My Hope & Focus Cancer Organizer—Manage Your Health and Ease Your Mind*

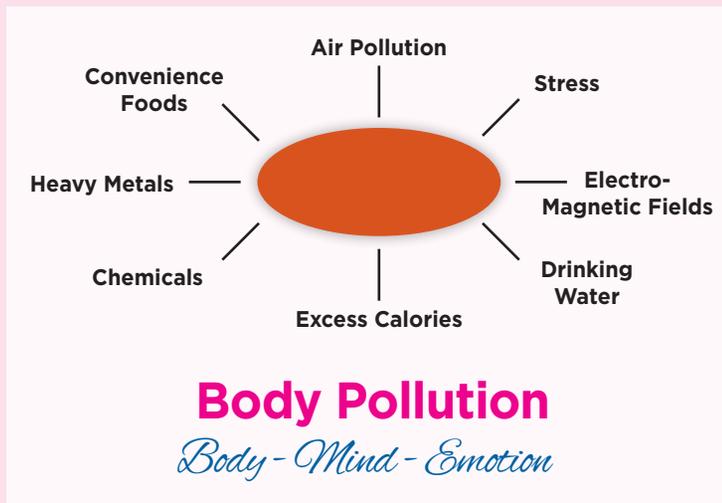
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**T**he body is exposed to thousands of toxins every day from a variety of sources. Detoxification is a process aiming to eliminate all the negative effects on our body from the environment, such as industrial chemicals, pesticides, additives in our foods, secondary smoke, pollutants, or heavy metals. Many of these chemicals are estrogen mimics called xeno-estrogens. They may come from the air, electronic devices, our food, water we drink or bathe in, the clothes we wear and medications we take. The body processes and detoxifies toxins through the liver, kidneys, bowels and lower intestines, lungs and skin, changing them into safer chemicals and excreting them.

When peoples' bodies start accumulating toxins a variety of health imbalances occur. Waste may begin to re-circulate within the body. Toxins can get into the blood stream and cause inflammation in various parts of the body. The body may seek to purge excess waste through the skin causing acne, rashes, eczema or other unhealthy conditions. Toxins may remain in body fat, preventing people from losing weight and fully detoxifying.

Some of the signs that detoxification is needed: unexplained headaches; back pain; memory problems; brittle nails and hair; frequent allergy attacks. People who lead healthy, active lifestyles have an easier time eliminating toxins from their bodies. Those who eat a high fat, high sugar diet, consume caffeine and alcohol, smoke cigarettes, and get limited exercise accumulate more toxins (especially in fatty tissue) than the body can excrete.



## SIMPLE HOME DETOX METHODS

**Epsom Bath Salts:** Hot water draws toxins out of the body to the skin's surface. While the water cools, it pulls toxins from the skin. Epsom salts augment this detoxification by causing you to sweat. Also, when added to water, these natural salts can help to cleanse your colon.

**Lemon Water:** Add lemon to your water throughout the day. The acid in the lemons assists the cleansing process. Citrus fruits, such as lemons, contain a pure concentrated form of citric acid. Citric acid works like bleach on fat. Due to its acidity and high pH, citric acid penetrates and breaks down fat molecules.

## HOW TO SUPPORT THE BODY AND HELP IT TO ELIMINATE TOXINS

**Identify and reduce toxins in your environment.**

**Crack the windows and let fresh air in.** Indoor air can be five times as polluted as outdoor air, so open the windows weather permitting.

**Exercise:** It helps your blood and lymphatic system remove impurities and assists the passage of waste through the colon. Deeper breathing during exercise, boosts the oxygen supply to our cells, increases circulation and helps remove acid wastes via our lungs. Sweating during exercise opens and cleans pores.

**Diet:** Eat a diet rich in organic fresh fruits and vegetables; get plenty of fiber.

**Drink plenty of pure water.** It helps the kidneys flush excess acids.

**Get 8 hours of sleep per night;** sleep at least 3-5 feet away from electrical outlets and unplug devices to avoid exposure to Electro Magnetic Radiation.

**Get a massage.** This is a great way to stimulate toxin removal from various parts of the body.

**Detox your mind, heart and spirit.**

**DETOXIFICATION IS A POWERFUL TOOL AND SHOULD BE DONE UNDER KNOWLEDGEABLE AND PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION.**

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# September

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4	Labor Day	5	6	7	8	9	10
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# Chemicals and Breast Cancer



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## To schedule an appointment:

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hahv.org



**Exposure to even low levels of lots of different chemicals matters!** A growing body of evidence links synthetic chemicals to the rising incidence of breast cancer. Parabens, phthalates and other hormone disrupting chemicals are found in cosmetics, beauty products and in women's bodies. One third of personal care products contain at least one chemical linked to cancer and brands using these chemicals are sold by many of the same companies that raise money for breast cancer awareness.

"These chemicals cause a 'triple whammy'—they increase levels of estrogen, alter cell metabolism, and influence the pathways that increase the risk of cancer," says Janet Gray, PhD, at Vassar College. These chemicals when inhaled, ingested, or absorbed through the skin, can mimic the effects of estrogen in the body or cause estrogen to act in a way that isn't normal.

Teenage girls are at a particularly vulnerable age for exposures. The eyeliner, lip-stick or shampoo they are using probably contains at least one chemical linked to a number of serious health concerns. These exposures can lead to health problems later in life.

## BISPHENOL A (BPA):

**CASH REGISTER RECEIPTS:** A hormone disruptor used in cash register thermal paper receipts. **Solution:** *Do Not take a cash register receipt.*

**CANNED FOODS:** The epoxy resin lining in canned foods contains bisphenol A (BPA) which leaches into food and then into us. **Solution:** *Avoid all canned foods. Choose fresh and frozen foods.*

**WATER BOTTLES:** (BPA) is used in polycarbonate plastic reusable water bottles and found in rigid plastics. **Solution:** *Use non-toxic, reusable stainless steel bottles or BPA free plastics.*

**PLASTICS:** Many plastics contain hormone-disrupting phthalates, especially polyvinyl chloride, or PVC (usually recycling code 3). Avoid clear, shatterproof plastic that contains BPA (usually code 7). Safer plastics are coded 1, 2, 4 and 5. **Solution:** *Choose stainless steel, glass or ceramic. Buy PVC free shower curtains. Cover your food with a ceramic plate or an unbleached paper towel instead of plastic wrap.*

**PHTHALATES:** Found in nail polish, perfumes, soaps, lotions, hair spray, deodorant, nail polish, hair gel, mousse, children's toys, perfumes & fragrances, plastics, cosmetics, register receipts, flooring, adhesives, wallpaper, furniture, scented detergents, shower curtains, car interiors. Fragrance can contain dozens of chemicals—including hormone-disrupting phthalates. The chemicals go into the bloodstream when applied to our skin and are absorbed into the skin from our clothing. (Phthalates may not be labelled. Look for "free-of" label claims to be sure to avoid them) **Solution:** *Check labels and buy fragrance-free products or use natural essential oils.*

## REMEMBER:

- The average adult is exposed to 126 chemicals every day—just in their personal care products alone.
- What you put on your skin gets absorbed into the blood stream.
- You have a right to know if the products you use contain compounds that may increase your risk of disease, including cancer.

**PARABENS:** (Methyl, Propyl, Ethyl, Butyl) Hormone disruptor linked to early puberty. Mimics estrogen, known to play a role in the development of breast cancers. May alter hormone levels. Found in cosmetics, lotions, creams, sunscreens, shaving/styling gels, toothpaste, shampoo, conditioners. **Solution:** *Read labels to avoid products containing parabens.*

**DRY CLEANING CHEMICALS:** Conventional dry cleaning uses perchloroethylene (PERC), formaldehyde, naphthalene, benzene have long-term health effects including cancer. Short term exposures can cause skin irritation, dizziness and headaches. **Solution:** *Use dry cleaners that clean with the CO2 process. Hand wash with unscented fabric detergent for delicates.*

**CLEANING PRODUCTS:** Many cleaning products contain the sudsing agents diethanolamine (DEA) and triethanolamine (TEA). They form nitrosamines – which are carcinogens and penetrate the skin. **Solution:** *Make your own. Use baking soda for scouring; vinegar to clean glass.*

**CHLORINE:** Women with breast cancer have 50% to 60% higher levels of organochlorines in their breast tissue than women without breast cancer. Chlorine is found in city water supplies, paper products, coffee filters, tampons and swimming pools. Harmful effects are intensified when the fumes are heated, as in the shower or dishwasher. **Solution:** *Use non-chlorine alternatives to bleach for household cleaning, laundry. Use natural coffee filters. Use a household water filter. Use unbleached toilet paper and tampons.*

**THE ULTIMATE SOLUTION: BECOME AN INFORMED CONSUMER. LOOK AROUND YOUR ENVIRONMENT. READ PRODUCT LABELS AND DON'T PURCHASE A PRODUCT CONTAINING CHEMICALS THAT CAN HARM YOU OR YOUR FAMILY.**

## RESOURCES

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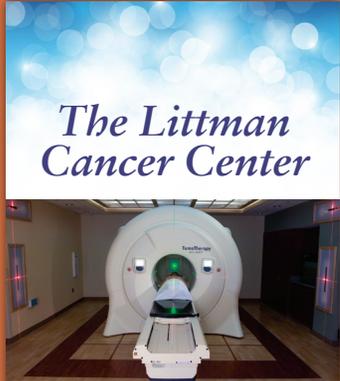
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# October

**S M T W T F S**



## The Littman Cancer Center

The Littman Cancer Center at St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital puts patients and their families at the core, with a clinical team that delivers compassionate care from diagnoses through recovery and survivorship.

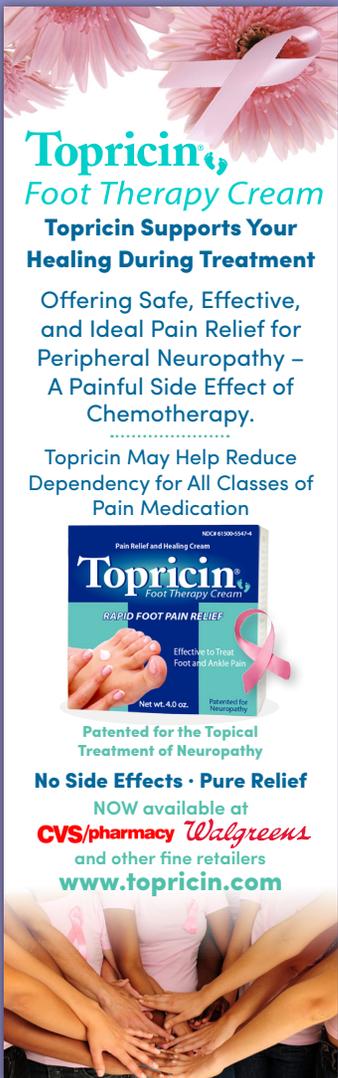
For more information regarding cancer services at St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital, please visit [www.stlukescornwallhospital.org](http://www.stlukescornwallhospital.org)



**LITTMAN CANCER CENTER**  
 at ST. LUKE'S CORNWALL HOSPITAL

							<b>1</b>
Rosh Hashana begins at sundown	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
	<b>9</b>	Columbus Day <b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
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	<b>30</b>	Halloween <b>31</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>

# The Benefits of Exercise

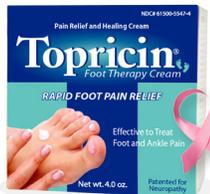


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There are both physical and psychological healing benefits to exercise. Exercise helps to fight stress and raises energy levels. Exercise oxygenates the body and stimulates lymphatic circulation which helps to clear the body of toxins. Aerobic exercise reduces the risk of developing breast cancer by altering the way that estrogen is broken down and metabolized. Exercise oxygenates the body and stimulates lymphatic circulation which helps to clear the body of toxins. Aerobic exercise reduces the risk of developing breast cancer by altering the way that estrogen is broken down and metabolized. It increases the ratio of ‘good’ to ‘bad’ estrogen metabolites. Studies have shown that the best remedy for “chemo fatigue” is exercise.

According to a study published by the Journal of Clinical Oncology, women with breast cancer who walked 3-4 hours a week had a 45% greater chance of surviving longer than those who lived a sedentary lifestyle. Exercise may also reduce the risk of cancer by normalizing body weight and composition. Lack of regular exercise promotes repair deficit inflammation, while regular exercise reduces inflammation. Exercise is an effective intervention to improve quality of life, cardiorespiratory fitness, physical functioning and fatigue in breast cancer patients and survivors.

TECHNIQUES	RECOMMENDATIONS	BENEFITS OF EXERCISE ACCORDING TO STUDIES
<b>AEROBIC EXERCISE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brisk walking</li> <li>• Strength training</li> <li>• Swimming</li> <li>• Tai Chi</li> <li>• Yoga</li> </ul>	3 to 5 days a week at moderate intensity for 20 to 60 minutes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aerobic exercise increases the ratio of “good” to “bad” metabolites of estrogen and reduces chronic inflammation.</li> <li>• Exercise decreases insulin resistance.</li> <li>• Physical exercise can blunt some of the negative side effects of breast cancer treatment, including reduced physical functioning and treatment fatigue.</li> <li>• Walking 3 to 5 hours a week lowers the risk of dying from breast cancer by 50%.</li> <li>• Elevates mood, improves concentration and the ability to focus.</li> <li>• Oxygenates the body; helps it to detoxify.</li> <li>• Studies suggest that exercise after breast cancer surgery and treatment can lower the risk of recurrence.</li> <li>• Strength training lowers the risk of lymphedema, caused by the removal of underarm lymph nodes, by 35%.</li> <li>• Strength or resistance exercises help to maintain strong bones, increase metabolism, and help to achieve or maintain a higher level of function.</li> <li>• Flexibility helps to maintain pain-free range-of-motion.</li> <li>• Helps to maintain body weight. A Body Mass Index of over 25 for women is considered overweight.</li> <li>• The estrogen pathway and the insulin pathway are two potential mechanisms by which physical activity could affect breast cancer survival.</li> </ul>
<b>STRENGTH/RESISTANCE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Machine, free weights</li> <li>• Exercise balls</li> <li>• Hand weights or bands</li> <li>• Pilates or calisthenics)</li> </ul>	Two times per week for every major muscle group.	
<b>FLEXIBILITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yoga</li> <li>• Tai chi</li> <li>• Ballet</li> </ul>	Stretching can be performed daily, or several times a day	

## HOW TO GET STARTED

- A varied exercise regime is more interesting, and easier to stick to. Half of all people who begin a vigorous training regime drop out within a year.
- Start slowly to build your endurance.
- Start small: 10 minutes of exercise three times a week can build a good base for novices. Gradually build up the length of these every-other-day sessions to 30 minutes or more.
- The key to maintaining an exercise program is to find activities that are exciting, challenging & satisfying.
- Even if you’re short on time, you can work out for only 15-20 minutes and still build up a sweat, feel energized and go on with your day!

**LACK OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IS KNOWN TO BE A MODIFIABLE RISK FACTOR FOR BREAST CANCER RECURRENCE AND MORTALITY, AND ONE WHICH IS SOLELY WITHIN THE CONTROL OF THE PERSON WITH THE DISEASE.**

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Melissa Harris, MFA, is an internationally known artist, author, and psychic.

Her images grace the covers of books, CDs, magazines, and calendars worldwide.

Melissa also teaches "Painting Outside the Lines"™ art-making workshops in Hurley, NY. She is known for her *Spirit Essence Portraits*.

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# November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S			
		1	2	3	4	5			
Daylight Savings Ends Fall back	6	7	Election Day	8	9	10	Veterans Day	11	12
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19		
	20	21	22	23	Thanksgiving	24	25	26	
	27	28	29	30					

# Breast Cancer Advocacy: Making a Difference

BREAST CANCER OPTIONS  
845-339-HOPE (4673)  
www.breastcanceroptions.org



info@NYSBCSEN.org  
www.nysbcсен.org

The New York State Breast Cancer Support and Education Network (NYSBCSEN) is the only statewide network of community-based, survivor-driven breast cancer organizations in New York. Our member organizations reach over 100,000 New Yorkers each year with essential breast cancer support and education services.

**A**dvances in science and technology have increased options for treating breast cancer, but it is advocates that have changed the way people deal with this disease. Women are no longer simply passive patients, but are survivors, informed consumers, advocates and activists who are speaking up for themselves and others and speaking out for issues relevant to the treatment and prevention of breast cancer. Becoming an advocate helps them get through their breast cancer experiences and gain a feeling of control over their lives.

Advocates have become educated in the science of breast cancer and now have a seat at the table with scientists when decisions are made about research and policy. They have a unique contribution to make to cancer research and play an important role in the cancer care setting giving a “face” to the disease reminding researchers of the human element. They provide input that strengthens research projects, assist in clinical trial design, help develop patient materials and facilitate community outreach and education.

As the discoveries of basic science have been translated to better clinical treatment, a new sense of hope has emerged. Quality of life now shares the spotlight with quantity of life as breast cancer shifts from an acute to a chronic condition and as the number of long-term survivors has increased. Advocates express concerns about issues affecting their lives beyond treatment. These include, accurate diagnosis, the complexity of treatment decisions, access to quality cancer care, informed consent, privacy issues, availability of supportive care treatments, effective doctor-patient communication skills and the long term side effects of treatments. Survivors are also concerned about the impact of their disease on spouses and family, on fertility and sexuality, on employability and on their long-term survival. The identification of these issues has given rise to a movement that has shifted away from powerless victim to empowered survivor.

Political advocacy has helped breast cancer patients in numerous ways. Women now have more access to screening, earlier diagnosis and better treatments. Breast cancer advocates have been instrumental in increasing federal funding for breast cancer research and have helped to pass laws that provide cancer treatment coverage to low-income, uninsured women. Advocates work with their Legislators on the gaps in patient care, the needs of underserved populations and what research should be funded because Legislators need to understand the issues patients are facing. Sometimes they need prodding from concerned citizens.

Advocacy can also include caring and support at the individual level. Bring a meal, do an errand, help with chores, or drive a cancer patient to an appointment or as someone who has “been there,” provide personal emotional support and knowledge for those newly diagnosed.

**PINKWASHING:** October’s staggering array of Pink Ribbon “cause marketing” promotional campaigns and company tie-ins, target every conceivable consumer item “for the Cure”. When these companies use known or suspected cancer causing ingredients in their products, which many—if not most—do, they are “pinkwashing”. *These companies need to decide if they want to be part of the problem or part of the solution. Their supported research focuses primarily on detection and treatment with less than 10% of research dollars looking at breast cancer with a goal of primary prevention.*

**You can make a difference! Ask questions before you buy products with pink ribbons. Advocacy is a tool for change. Early detection and better treatments are not enough!** Despite all of our advances about 25% of the women who are diagnosed and treated for early-stage breast cancer will later learn that their cancer has spread to other organs. Learning to treat early breast cancer so that it doesn’t spread and to manage advanced breast cancer is essential, but we must learn the causes of breast cancer in the first place.

Advocates have changed the conversation, challenging corporations; the pharmaceutical industry; local, state and federal legislators; healthcare institutions; providers; health agencies and the media. Advocacy organizations such as The New York State Breast Cancer Network, Breast Cancer Action, Breast Cancer Fund, the National Breast Cancer Coalition, and Silent Spring Institute, among others, have waged many effective awareness campaigns. They have been instrumental in changing business practices and invoking the Precautionary Principle – “better safe than sorry”, helped the passage of legislation to protect the public from toxic exposures and inequities in medical care, for example: banning in New York State endocrine disrupting Bisphenol-A (BPA) in infant and baby toys, bottles and feeding products.

**Join with others** through local organizations, such as Breast Cancer Options; state organizations or national organizations, such as those mentioned here to work with community leaders and elected officials at all levels to advocate for regulations and laws that benefit cancer patients.

**BREAST CANCER OPTIONS ASKS YOU TO ‘THINK PINK LOCALLY’.**

# December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	Christmas Eve Hanukkah 24
Christmas Day 25	Kwanzaa 26	27	28	29	30	New Year's Eve 31

# About Breast Cancer Options

If you have breasts or know someone who does... Please show your support.

## BREAST CANCER OPTIONS

is a grassroots, nonprofit organization and the largest provider of free peer support, advocacy and education services in the Hudson Valley.

We rely more than ever upon individual contributions to accomplish our work.

Please send a check payable to

Breast Cancer Options  
101 Hurley Avenue, Suite 10  
Kingston, NY 12401

...or make a credit card donation online on our web site:

[breastcanceroptions.org](http://breastcanceroptions.org)

...or call us at

845-339-HOPE (4673)

## Thank you

Breast Cancer Options is a non-profit, tax exempt 501(c)3 corporation.

All donations are tax-deductible and truly appreciated!

**All of our services are free.**

**B**reast Cancer Options (BCO) is an organization of breast cancer survivors, advocates and healthcare professionals who understand that when you are diagnosed with breast cancer, you are suddenly faced with some of the most important decisions you will ever make about your own healthcare. When you explore your options, we want you to understand:

- You do not have to face all this, including physician visits, by yourself.
- You are important and deserve answers. We will help you get them.
- What information and sources are credible and reliable.
- Which lifestyle changes and complementary therapies can be integrated in treatment.

## SUPPORT

- Companion/Advocate Program—Trained, knowledgeable and sympathetic breast cancer survivors can accompany newly diagnosed patients to medical visits.
- Peer-led support groups—Community-based in Ulster, Dutchess, Greene, Columbia, Sullivan and Orange counties. See our web site or call for locations and times.
- Camp Lightheart—A free sleepover camp for children who have a mom with breast cancer.
- Retreat for women with metastatic breast cancer.
- Massage Clinics—Held in conjunction with our support groups.
- Telephone and e-mail consultations—Questions are answered with information from reliable sources.
- Peer-to-Peer Mentoring—Talk to someone who has gone through the same experience.

## EDUCATION/INFORMATION

- Annual Healthy Lifestyles Calendar
- BCO News E-mail updates: Disseminated weekly to Breast Cancer Survivors and Healthcare Professionals all over the world.
- Breast Cancer Options web site offers a variety of up-to-date information and resources.
- Annual Integrative Medicine Conference: Top professionals in complementary and integrative therapies speak and present workshops on the most current modalities.
- Healthy Lifestyles Program: A series of workshops to look at the ways we can make small, easy changes in our daily lives to improve our health after a cancer diagnosis.

## ADVOCACY

- BCO is an advocate for breast cancer patients at the regional, state and national levels.
- We can help with referrals for insurance and legal problems.
- BCO is a founding member and board member of the New York State Breast Cancer Network.

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Hope Nemiroff

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# 16 Steps to a Healthier Life for You and Your Family

**A** growing body of evidence shows that healthy lifestyle factors like a good diet and regular exercise provide significant benefits, possibly offering protection against cancer recurrences about on a par with chemotherapy and the newer hormonal and drug treatments. If you combine these risk-reducing habits and also limit your exposure to toxins you will benefit even more.

**1 Exercise!** Breast cancer patients will be 50 percent less likely to die from the disease than sedentary women if they exercise on a regular basis. Women undergoing treatments for breast cancer benefit from moderate intensity, regular aerobic activity.

**2 Control your weight.** Weight is a bit confusing. If you are overweight before menopause, your risk of breast cancer is lower than average. If you are overweight after menopause, your risk of breast cancer is higher than average.

**3 Spend eight hours a night in darkness** to encourage normal melatonin levels. The hormone Melatonin is released at night and has cancer-fighting properties. It's the reason you get sleepy when it's dark and research indicates that melatonin also puts cancer cells to sleep. Make sure you get regular exposure to bright light during the daytime.

**4 Eat an organically grown diet** whenever possible. Your diet should contain fruits and vegetables, complex carbohydrates, organic protein and healthy-fats. Breast cancer has been linked to some pesticides used on non-organic fruits and vegetables and estrogen-like hormones used in raising livestock.

**5 Avoid fried, char-broiled, or barbecued** as forms of cooking. The Char contains PAHs polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons that cause mammary tumors in animals. Can't give it up? Take an aspirin with your char-broiled meal, as studies suggest that aspirin may negate the potentially harmful effects of flame-broiled foods.

**6 Avoid bleached products**, i.e. coffee filters, paper, napkins, toilet tissue and tampons. Using bleached coffee filters alone can result in a lifetime exposure to dioxin that exceeds acceptable risks. The FDA detected dioxins and dozens of other substances in conventional tampons.

**7 Avoid using chlorine bleach** for household cleaning or laundry. The chlorine in dish-washing detergent mixes with steam to create a gas. When the dishwasher is opened, this toxic gas is released. Hydrogen peroxide bleaches are a safe alternative; they break down into water and oxygen.

**8 Drink filtered or bottled water**, not city water that contains chlorine and fluoride. A simple water filter can now serve as a valuable safeguard against toxic substances and cancer.

**9 Do not use pesticides or herbicides** on your lawn or garden. They mimic estrogen, a known breast cancer risk factor. A cup of salt in a gallon of vinegar will kill weeds.

**10 Reduce or eliminate purchase of plastic products.** Some plastics leach hormone-disrupting chemicals into whatever they come in contact with. Polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastics are dangerous and used in toys that children put in their mouths, so keep an eye out for nontoxic toys.

**11 Use personal care products without chemicals** like parabens or phthalates. They disrupt normal hormone function and are found in many personal care products. By law all skin care products must be labeled with the ingredients in descending order of their quantity in the product.

**12 Avoid alcohol.** Regular, moderate use of alcohol affects the levels of important female hormones. Two to five drinks per day may be associated with a 40% higher rate of breast cancer than in non-drinkers. Women who choose to drink can lower their risk of developing breast cancer by taking 400 mcg. of folic acid or eat a folate rich diet.

**13 Use wet cleaning rather than dry cleaning** which contains PERC (perchloroethylene). If you must use traditional dry cleaning, open the plastic bags on your clothing and air them out before putting them in a closet or on your body.

**14 Avoid PBDE s (polybrominated diphenyl ethers)** found in electronic equipment and furniture. They are endocrine disruptors linked to reproductive damage, affect thyroid hormones and may cause cancer. They are flame retardants often added to polyurethane foam, various plastics, and electronics equipment. Choose carpet pads, bedding, cushions, and upholstered furniture made from natural fibers including wool, cotton, and hemp.

**15 Learn how to handle stress.** Levels of the stress hormone cortisol rise with increased stress. High cortisol levels suppress immune response by reducing natural killer cell activity. These cells are important in surveillance against malignant cells and for destroying viruses and tumor cells.

**16 Learn to read labels;** become an informed consumer.

**BREAST CANCER OPTIONS, INC.**

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